

THE ROYAL ACHAEMENID CROWN

(Taf. 16,2-19,6)

1 INTRODUCTION*

Writing on Achaemenid headdresses in this journal, H. von Gall argued that the Achaemenid rulers, like their Sasanid successors, wore individual crowns. Such a crown was to symbolise the *hvarnah* of king and empire which had to be renewed at the accession of each new monarch. Von Gall based his theory mainly on the apparent pluriformity of the Achaemenid crowns on the reliefs at Persepolis and Naqsh-e Rostam. He assigned the various forms to different kings and distinguished the personal crowns of Darius I, Xerxes I. and Artaxerxes I.

Von Gall's article was the first to deal systematically with the crowns on the reliefs of Persepolis and Naqsh-e Rostam. Although his observations and photographs are of great value, his theory of a personal crown fits uneasily with some of the general features of Achaemenian art. As has been stressed by many scholars, this art usually represented a timeless state of affairs. No historical scenes were depicted, but rather timeless scenes meant to emphasise the continuity of Achaemenid rule.

In the following I will try to show that there are not many arguments in favour of the theory of a personal Achaemenid crown. Besides the reliefs of Persepolis and Naqsh-e Rostam, seals and coins will be dealt with. Not only kings shall be discussed, but also crowned 'winged genii', sphinxes and bull-men.¹

2 THE RELIEF OF BĪSOTŪN

About 521 B. C. Darius gave order to cut a relief in the rock of Bīsotūn with an inscription in Elamite. A Babylonian and an Old-Persian ver-

sion of this inscription were added later.² On the relief the king is seen setting one foot on the body

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Besides the conventional AMI abbreviations, in this article the following will be used: Calmeyer 1974: P. Calmeyer, The Subject of the Achaemenid tomb reliefs. In: Proceedings of the IIIrd Annual Symposium on Archaeological Research in Iran (1974) 233-242; CHI 2: The Cambridge History of Iran, vol. 2 I. Gershevitch (ed.) The Median and Achaemenian Periods (1968); CHI 3,2: The Cambridge History of Iran. Vol. 3,2 E. Yarshater (ed.) The Seleucid, Parthian and Sasanian Periods (1968); Frankfort 1939: H. Frankfort, Cylinder Seals (1939); von Gall 1974: H. von Gall, Die Kopfbedeckung des Persischen Ornaments bei den Achämeniden, AMI. NF 7, 1974, 145-161; Kent 1953: R. G. Kent Old Persian grammar. Text, lexicon = American Oriental Series 33 (1953²); Lushey 1968: H. Lushey, Studien zu dem Darius-Relief von Bisutun, AMI NF 1, 1968, 63-94; Persepolis I: E. F. Schmidt Persepolis I. Structures, reliefs, inscriptions = OIP LXVIII (1953); Persepolis II: E. F. Schmidt, Persepolis II. Contents of the Treasury and other discoveries = OIP LXIX (1957); Persepolis III: E. F. Schmidt Persepolis III. The Royal Tombs and other Monuments = OIP LXX (1957); Pope VII: A. U. Pope, A Survey of Persian Art. vol. VII (1964/65); Porada 1979: E. Porada, Some Thoughts on the Audience Reliefs of Persepolis in: Studies in Classical Art and Archeology (a tribute to P. H. von Blanckenhagen; 1979); Roaf 1983: M. Roaf, Sculptures and Sculptors at Persepolis, Iran 21, 1983; Stronach 1989: D. Stronach, Early Achaemenid Coinage: Perspectives from the Homeland, IrAnt XXIV, 1989; Tilia I: A. B. Tilia, Studies and Restorations at Persepolis and other Sites of Fars I = IsMEO RM XVI (1972); Tilia II: A. B. Tilia, Studies and Restorations at Persepolis and other Sites of Fars II = IsMEO RM XVIII (1978).

¹ The possibility of Greek *kidaris* as a specific term for the Persian crown will not be discussed here. I hope to deal with this problem in the next volume of this journal.

² For a detailed study on the stages in which relief and inscriptions were carved see: Lushey 1968 and L. Trümpelmann, Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Monuments Darius I. von Bisutun und zur Datierung der Einführung der Altpersischen Schrift, AA 3,3, 1967, 281-298.

of Gaumata, the usurper of the Achaemenid throne. In front of Dareios are nine rebels who have been taken prisoner. Two weapon-bearers stand behind the king and a 'winged genius' is portrayed above the scene. All are identified by inscriptions giving their names, except for the weapon-bearers and the 'winged genius'.

Dareios is the central figure of the relief. He is distinct from the other figures by his size, the shape of his beard and his crown-like headdress. This headdress is made up of a band with crenelations on top of it, decorated by rosette-like and floral ornaments (*Abb. 1*). The two persons standing behind the king, the weapon-bearers, are apparently of some importance, since they walk in the same direction as the king, wear a rich dress and are taller than the rebels (although smaller than Dareios). They both wear a band similar to the headdress of the king which is also decorated with rosettes (which, however are different from those on the king's crown). Both bands equally lack the distinctive crenelations of Dareios' crown. There is no definite clue as to their identity but we may assume that these two persons were high-ranking nobles.³

The principal distinction between Dareios and the weapon-bearers or nobles behind him is not that he wears a crown-like headdress, but that his band is crenelated and theirs is not. As to his crown, the crenelations are the one distinctive detail that identify Dareios as King of Kings.⁴

3 PERSEPOLIS

3.1 The tačara of Dareios I.

In the tačara, the private palace of Dareios in Persepolis, a crowned figure is depicted six times.⁵ This man, obviously king Dareios himself, wears a rather high, possibly open crown with crenelations on top of it.⁶ The crowns vary slightly. All six have three or four horizontal rows of holes on the surface (*Taf. 16,4*). Only four crowns have vertical slits on both sides as well (*Taf. 16,5*).⁷

These slits always exceed the top of the crown.⁸ The slits also have (three) holes.

Erich Schmidt already suggested that the slits and holes were intended for the attachment of a metal, probably golden, ornament to the stone surface of the crowns.⁹ Such an ornament would possibly consist of two or three bands that were attached separately by means of the horizontal rows of holes.¹⁰ Apparently the sculptors tried different techniques of attachment, since two of the crowns lack the vertical slits on both sides.

Von Gall suggested that the tačara crowns, with their original ornaments, looked like high cylinders without any decoration except for the crenelations on top of them. He assumed that the metal ornaments were made of 'Goldfolie', i.e. a thin sheet of metal that was hammered onto the

³ The lack of accompanying inscriptions make it uncertain whether individuals are portrayed. If so, they could be identified as Gobryas and Intaphernes. They were members of the group of six nobles, named in DB IV §68, who killed, together with Dareios, Gaumata (c.f. Hdt. II 67-79). But why picture only two of them? To me Nagel's solution (RIA IV, 356ff s. v. 'Herrscher') seems more plausible: he suggests that kings of Parsa are meant, in this case Hystaspes and Arsames. They, Dareios' father and grandfather, are mentioned in DB I §1. In DSf §3b it is stated that they both were still alive at the time of Dareios' accession.

⁴ In this I agree with von Gall 1974, 149 '... daß es auf dem Bisutun-Relief nur die Stufenzinnen sind, die den König bzw. Darius kennzeichnen.' Von Gall assumes that the fillet of the weapon-bearers is the traditional headdress of the Patischorsians.

⁵ See Persepolis I, pls. 138-141.

⁶ There is, however, one crown without crenelations, which will be discussed below.

⁷ Tilia II, 59, fig. 7b.

⁸ See especially Persepolis I, pl. 140b.

⁹ Ibid. 226. This suggestion had already been made by Carsten Niebuhr in 1765. (C. Niebuhr, Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien und anderen umliegenden Ländern II (Copenhagen 1778) 137).

¹⁰ See also Porada 1979, 42: 'Each [of the tačara crowns] has different slits and holes made in the stone for metal spikes which would have held gilded bands of different width and in varying positions as well as stones of different colors and shapes. Each of the crowns would therefore have looked quite different.' I cannot see why each of the crowns would have looked different. All six of the crowns have rows of holes on about the same height. It seems therefore more probable to me that ornaments of the same shape were attached to the reliefs.

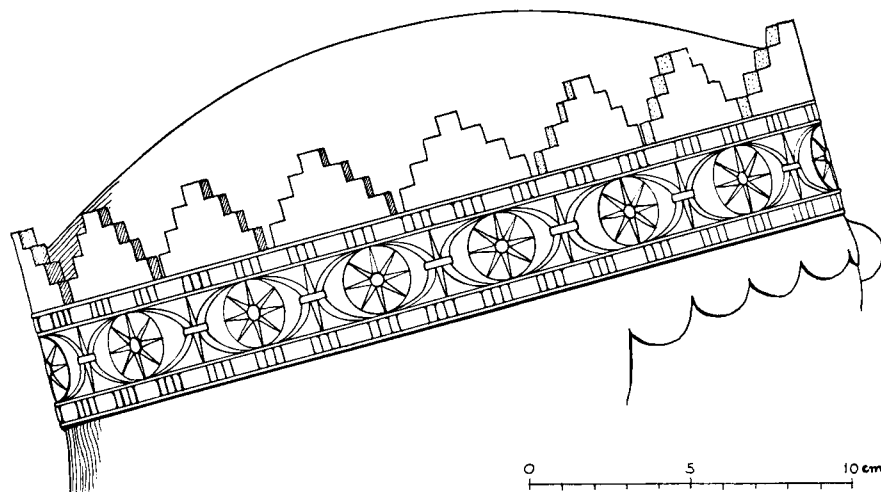


Abb. 1. Crenelated band of Dareios crown on the rock of Bisotūn. After Tilia II 58, figure 7a.

stone-surface, following exactly the shape of the relief. This is unlikely for the following three reasons:

1) The crenelations on top of the crowns are only fully elaborated as 'stepped' crenelations on the left and right side, the other crenelations appear as mere peaks (*Taf. 16,4*). A thin sheet of metal would certainly not have made these peaks look like stepped crenelations. Only a rather thick ornament, with stepped crenelations already elaborated on it, would do this. Such an ornament would also fit better with the slits and holes on the surface of the crowns, obviously meant to hold a thick ornament rather than a thin sheet.

2) One of the tačara crowns, unlike the others, has no crenelations on top of it (*Taf. 17.1*). Where he can be surely identified, however, Dareios always wears a crenelated crown. One uncrenelated crown against five crenelated ones in the same palace seems odd. We may safely assume that crenelations were indeed visible originally, but only on the metal ornament attached to this crown by means of the usual slits and holes. In this particular case the slits exceed the crown even further than usual (by ± 2 cm at least). Thus, the crenelations on top of the metal ornament

must have been 'free standing', they were not supported by crenelations or rough peaks in the stone surface. Such free standing crenelations are only possible by means of a thick ornament. Free standing crenelations made of a thin sheet would be too vulnerable.

3) A further argument is provided by a piece of ribbed gold found in the apadana in Persepolis.¹¹ This band, probably for attachment to a relief, is about 3–4 mm thick. Similar bands may have been attached to the tačara crowns.

If the metal ornaments were indeed fully elaborated before attachment, it is possible that besides the crenelations on top of them, there were other ornaments like rosettes, stars or floral patterns that were engraved on the metal. Therefore it is quite possible that the tačara crowns originally were identical with the Bisotūn crown and had similar ornaments. The main difference between the tačara and the Bisotūn reliefs, all surely portraying Dareios, is that the crenelated band of Bisotūn is found in the tačara around a high

¹¹ Tilia II, Plate C, 3. Tilia (p. 60) also thinks of a golden band or plate which was already decorated before it was attached.

cylinder.¹² There is no significant difference between the two bands. Von Gall calls the difference between the Bīsotūn and the tačara crown a 'Höherentwicklung'.¹³ It is, however, more preferable to consider it as a combination of two, originally distinct elements. The high cylinder, whether it was ribbed or not, may well have been the common Persian headdress.¹⁴ The crenelated band, signifying royalty, probably remained unchanged and was only placed around this cylinder.

3.2 The hadish and harem of Xerxes I

The crowns on the reliefs of Xerxes' hadish are different from those in his harem. Similar to the crowns of Dareios' tačara, the hadish crowns have slits for metal ornaments on both sides, exceeding the crowns.¹⁵ These slits are missing in the harem.¹⁶ Both the harem and the hadish crowns lack crenelations in the stone. They have the shape of a high cylinder that, according to von Gall, '... offenbar auch sonst keinerlei Ornamentik getragen hat'.¹⁷ In this line of argument, as von Gall claims, Xerxes' personal crown would have been this undecorated cylinder.

There are two objections to this thesis. As already seen, the hadish crowns have slits on both sides, like the crowns in Dareios' tačara. Similarly, the hadish crowns have three holes in each slit, but lack (horizontal rows of) holes on the surface (*Taf.* 17, 2). Xerxes' crown in the hadish probably consisted of three different (golden) bands, like his father's crown in the tačara.

Secondly, von Gall's thesis causes a contradiction, as is shown by two inscriptions, one in the tačara and one in the hadish. The former (XPk) is written on the robe of one of the six crowned men in the tačara. It says: 'Xerxes, son of king Dareios, an Achaemenid.'¹⁸ Since no royal title of Xerxes is mentioned it appears that he still was a prince at the time this inscription was written. The man on whose robe the inscription is engraved, most likely Xerxes, wears one of the crenelated tačara crowns. According to von Gall this is due to the

fact that Xerxes was still a (crown) prince and therefore wore the same type of crown as his father did.¹⁹

In short, von Gall assumes that Xerxes was still a crown prince in the tačara, but already king at the time the hadish was constructed and therefore wore his own personal crown on the reliefs of this building. This may, however, be questioned. A certain contradiction becomes clear when we read a second inscription, recently discovered in Xerxes' hadish by A. Shapur Shahbazi: 'Dareios the great king, king of kings, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenid.'²⁰

The conclusion from this inscription can only be that Dareios was the reigning monarch at the time the hadish was constructed.²¹ Apparently Xerxes was still a crown prince in both tačara and

¹² A crenelated band placed *on top* of the cylinder seems most likely, because the slits for the attachment of the metal ornaments all exceed the cylinders.

¹³ Von Gall 1974, 150.

¹⁴ The existence of the low crenelated band as a separate type of crown was proven by Tilia who discovered that two persons (until then regarded as attendants) in the tačara wear such a band (See Tilia II, 63, fig. 10b). The crenelated bands are scratched into the stone. As Tilia stated, it seems impossible that these persons are attendants; they could very well be members of the royal family.

¹⁵ See Persepolis I, Plates 178–181.

¹⁶ Ibid. Plates 193–194.

¹⁷ Von Gall 1974, 150.

¹⁸ *xšayāršā : dārayavahauš : Xšbyā : puça : haxāmanišiya* (see: Kent 1953, 152; Elamite version in: E. Herzfeld, *Altpersische Inschriften* = AMI Erg. Bd. I (1938) 42).

¹⁹ The same seems to be the case with the royal tomb in Naqsh-e Rostam, which is attributed to Xerxes (see on this hypothetical attribution: Persepolis III, 93). The king on the relief of this tomb wears a crenelated crown. According to von Gall this tomb therefore must have been made at the time when Xerxes was still a crown prince. In this von Gall is probably right since Xerxes was at an relatively advanced age when he ascended the throne.

²⁰ *dārayavauš : Xš : vazraka : vištāspahyā : puça : haxāmanišiya* See A. Sh. Shahbazi *The Old Persian Inscriptions* = *Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum* I.1.1 (1985) 11–12, pls. XI–XII. Shahbazi called the inscription DPb.h.

²¹ Xerxes (as a king) could of course have mentioned his father in an inscription, which he indeed did for several times. In such inscriptions, however, he always mentions his own name and titles, his father is never called 'great king' or 'king of kings' but only 'king Dareios'. Apparently the titles were only used by the reigning monarch.

hadish. Therefore Xerxes 'should' in both cases wear the same (crenelated) crown as his father. In the hadish, however, according to von Gall he wears an undecorated cylinder.

The solution to this problem is quite simple. The hadish crowns may originally have been identical with those in the tačara. As we have seen, the ornaments of the hadish crowns also consisted of three bands. Moreover the slits on both sides of these crowns all exceed the crowns and the ornaments must therefore have exceeded the crowns as well. The explanation for this may be that the ornaments had crenelations that were standing free like those on top of one of the tačara crowns mentioned above. This tačara crown may have been the example for a new technique of attachment which was later used in the hadish as well. The method of attachment could be the only difference between the tačara crowns of Dareios and the hadish crowns of Xerxes. If we assume that these two types of crowns were identical, there is no longer a contradiction: Xerxes wears his father's crenelated crown in the hadish, which he 'should' as a crown prince. It seems quite probable that Dareios and his son wore identical crowns in both their private palaces.

This probability, however, still is no definite argument against the thesis on Xerxes' personal crown. As a crown prince (the relief of the tačara; the reliefs of his hadish; the reliefs of his tomb in Naqsh-e Rostam) Xerxes would have worn his fathers' crown, but as a king his own personal crown, the 'undecorated cylinder'. This type apparently later seems to be used in the so-called 'harem' of Xerxes. In this building, the crowns on the reliefs do not show slits or holes (Taf. 17,3). Their surface, however, is very smooth and, as Michael Roaf pointed out, particularly smooth surfaces like these were originally painted.²² On the basis of traces of paint and fine incised lines on the stone surface, Tilia was able to reconstruct the beautiful garments shown on the harem reliefs.²³ The crowns themselves showed no patterns or traces of paint, but there were some incised lines on the headdresses of the guards.²⁴ It is likely that the crowns in the harem were

painted as well. It is therefore all but certain that the cylinders were originally undecorated.²⁵

Secondly, an undecorated cylinder may have been an odd headdress for a king since a number of ordinary persons on the reliefs on the staircases of the tripylon and the apadana wear such an undecorated cylinder.²⁶ Not all of them can be kings or portraits of Xerxes. Like that of Dareios on the rock of Bisotūn, a portrait of Xerxes needed distinctive features. Tallness, garments and the shape of the beard served this purpose. Apart from these a distinctive headgear, indicating royalty, seems to be indispensable. An undecorated cylinder, worn also by ordinary people on the apadana staircase reliefs, would be an unappropriately indistinctive element of the king's royal outfit.

It should be emphasized that an undecorated cylinder is nowhere attested as personal crown of Xerxes I. All painted and metal ornaments have disappeared. We can therefore only guess what the crowns in the hadish and harem originally looked like. Since crenelations distinguish king Dareios from his weapon-bearers on the rock of Bisotūn, they must have been of some importance within Achaemenian iconography. In view of this apparent importance it is preferable to assume that Xerxes wore a crenelated crown. This is at least technically possible for the reliefs of harem and hadish.

Giovanni Garbini pointed out that crenelations already had a certain importance before the Achaemenid period. He argued that the 'stepped pinnacle', as he calls the crenelation, was a reli-

²² M. Roaf 1983, 7.

²³ Tilia II, 54, fig. 6.

²⁴ Ibid. 64-65, fig. 11a-b.

²⁵ The fact that paint, instead of metal ornaments, was used in the 'harem', is not astonishing. The building was not one of the official palaces. It was probably regarded as less important since it was only used as a store-house or as a private palace of the women belonging to the king's harem.

²⁶ See Persepolis I, pls. 66-72 (tripylon staircase); pls. 29b, 30b, 32b, 34b, 38b, 40b, 42b, 44b, 46b, 48b (eastern staircase of the apadana); Plate 57 (northern staircase of the apadana).

gious architectural element in Elamite iconography.²⁷ Arthur Pope discussed the numerous crenelations on the walls and staircases (and probably on the roofs of the buildings) in Persepolis. He interpreted these crenelations as 'images of the sacred mountain'.²⁸

It may be unnecessary to suppose such a religious character as Pope and Garbini did, but that does not mean that crenelations had little importance. Edith Porada exhaustively studied the origin of battlements (which include crenelations).²⁹ She concluded that battlements and crenelations, had a 'sacred and protective character' and considered the crenelations in Persepolis as 'meaningful symbols' with 'protective power.' I fully agree with Porada that it is unlikely for Xerxes to have abolished this symbol and to have opted for an uncrenelated crown.³⁰ It seems far more likely that crenelations had become a symbol of Achaemenid kingship, or at least of the Achaemenid royal family.

3.3 The treasury reliefs

In the treasury of Persepolis two reliefs were found which the Tilias proved to have been removed from the northern and eastern apadana staircases.³¹ A royal audience is depicted: the king is seated with the crown prince standing behind him. They both wear the same crown, an undecorated cylinder (*Taf. 17,4*).

It is not relevant to the present study who is the king depicted on the reliefs.³² What matters here is the fact that von Gall argues that king Dareios always has a crenelated crown. According to him the treasury reliefs, showing an undecorated cylinder, therefore cannot depict Dareios, but must depict Xerxes. At first sight von Gall's theory seems to be affirmed by the fact that the surface of the treasury reliefs is quite rough. There are no slits or holes in the stone. It is, therefore, unlikely that the reliefs were ever decorated with paint or metal ornaments.

There are, however, some objections to be made. The relatively large treasury reliefs were original-

ly the central and therefore very conspicuous, panels of the apadana staircases if not the most important reliefs in Persepolis. It would be quite curious if they, unlike most other reliefs, were not decorated in any way.³³ Moreover certain elements, like rosettes, are obviously unfinished. The surface of the reliefs is covered with chisel marks which were not smoothed as usual.³⁴ On one of the reliefs there is a large irregularity above the cylinder (*Taf. 17,4*). The conclusion of both Tilias and Porada that the treasury reliefs were never finished seems to explain these features very well.³⁵

²⁷ G. Garbini, *The Stepped Pinnacle in Ancient Near East, East and West* 9.1-2, 1958, 86: 'it is certain that it was chiefly used in edifices connected with religious beliefs.'

²⁸ A. U. Pope, *Persepolis as a ritual City*, *Archaeology* 10.1, 1957, 126: 'crenelations are almost like pictographs of the sacred mountain and have been used as such for over five thousand years.'

²⁹ E. Porada, *Battlements in the Military Architecture and in the Symbolism of the Ancient Near East* in: D. Fraser (ed.) *Essays in the History of Architecture* presented to Rudolf Wittkower, vol. II (1967) 1-12, Plates 1-14 b.

³⁰ Porada 1979, 42: 'There is ... the disturbing thought that crenelations were not only a decoration but also a meaningful symbol, as shown by their appearance as upper filials all over Persepolis. Did Xerxes and the other kings whose crowns in their reliefs also lack crenelations, really relinquish the protective power of this symbolic decoration, or was it present in a manner no longer visible in the reliefs?'

³¹ Tilias I, 1972, 175 ff, 191 ff, pls. XCVII-XCVIII.

³² See for instance A. Farkas, *Achaemenid Sculpture = Uitgaven van het Nederlands Historisch-Archeologisch Instituut te Istanbul XXXIII* (1974) 177 ff; A. Sh. Shahbazi, *The Persepolis 'Treasury Reliefs'* once more, *AMI N. F.* 9, 1976, 151-156; *Persepolis I*, 162-169; R. N. Frye, *Persepolis Again*, *JNES* 33, 1974, 383-386; A. B. Tilias, *Recent discoveries at Persepolis*, *AJA* 81, 1977, 67-77.

³³ For instance the king and the crown prince on the treasury reliefs do not have any golden ornaments like bracelets, necklaces and earrings. Holes in the reliefs of the taçara, hadish, tripylon and hundred column hall indicate that such golden ornaments were a usual decoration for reliefs depicting the king. - It is remarkable that the dignitary and the attendants on the audience reliefs do wear earrings (cut out into the stone, see Tilias I, pls. CXXV; CXXVII) while king and crown prince do not (*Taf. 17,4*). It seems highly unlikely that the king of this relief, unlike his counterparts on the other reliefs (e.g. *Persepolis I*, pl. 99) would not have worn golden earrings. Such earrings must have been intended, but were never actually attached to the stone, nor were holes for the attachment ever cut out into the surface of the reliefs. The reason for this can only be that the reliefs were never finished.

³⁴ See Porada 1979, 41.

If the reliefs are indeed unfinished, the shape of the crown cannot provide any arguments for the identification of the king portrayed and consequently cannot be used as an argument for a personal crown. As in the case of the reliefs in the tačara, hadish or harem, the shape of the crown which was originally depicted or (in this case) planned, is not visible anymore.

3.4 The hundred column hall and the tripylon of Artaxerxes I. (?)

A number of reliefs of the hundred column hall in Persepolis feature an enthroned king. There is no crown prince behind the throne, which seems to fit very well with the reign of Artaxerxes I, who became king at the age of only eighteen years and cannot have had an adult heir as yet.³⁶ Besides, an inscription of Artaxerxes I. (A¹Pa), mentioning the completion of the palace begun by his father, was found in the hundred column hall.³⁷ Therefore we may assume that the king on the reliefs of this building is indeed Artaxerxes I.

The crown that Artaxerxes wears is described by von Gall as a cylinder 'mit breitem oberem Rand'. Only one crown on the reliefs of the hundred column hall, however, has such a thick brim. A few crowns have no brims at all, the others only very thin ones.³⁸ In the northern porticoes of the building all crowns have slits on both sides, exceeding the crowns (*Taf. 17,5*). The ornaments that were originally attached to these crowns also extended beyond their top (brims included). There are no slits in the stone surface of the reliefs in the southern porticoes (*Taf. 17,6*).

Von Gall argues that crenelations were visible on the brims of the crowns of the hundred column hall either by metal ornaments (northern porticoes) or by paint (southern porticoes).³⁹ The crown with the crenelated brim would be Artaxerxes' personal crown.⁴⁰

Because of the metal ornaments extending beyond the upper edges of the crowns in the northern porticoes, it seems indeed probable that the

crowns of the hundred column hall were decorated with crenelations. These crenelations were probably free standing, which, as we have seen, was possible by means of a thick metal ornament. It is doubtful whether the crenelations were attached to or painted on the brims of the crowns: most of the brims are too small for this purpose. Judging from the slits that exceed above the crowns it seems more likely that the brims only formed the lower part of a crenelated band on top of the crown.

The brims may well have been a new technical device for attaching metal ornaments to the

³⁵ Ibid. 41: The audience relief at Persepolis 'has a myriad of unsmoothed chisel marks and an uneven surface above the top of the king's headgear. Therefore it could have been merely blocked out rather than finished, or an attempt was made to rework the shape of the headgear. The relief in Teheran was badly damaged at the top, but what is left of the royal headgear seems smooth. This, however, may merely be an impression induced by the thick layer of wax placed over the entire surface of the relief. The fact that in the stones there are no holes, which would have permitted the attachment of the jewelry of the royal persons, as seen in other reliefs had caused not only the author but also Mrs. Tilia to wonder whether the reliefs had been completed.' Tilia II, 57: 'Only in the audience scenes ... the costume of the king is void of decoration and so is the throne on which he is seated. We find this very puzzling considering the high quality of these bas-reliefs and the important position they once held. It might be explained by the fact that the work on carving the reliefs had never been finished ...' On the contrary, von Gall considered the reliefs as finished (von Gall 1974, 148): 'Nun tragen auf beiden Reliefs König und Kronprinz eine relativ hohe Krone mit geradem, ungliedertem oberem Rand, und es ist dabei zu betonen, daß die Reliefs auch in diesem Detail als vollendet anzusehen sind.'

³⁶ Von Gall 1974, 152, n. 46; 154.

³⁷ Old Persian version: Kent 1953, 153; Babylonian version: F. H. Weißbach, *Die Keilinschriften der Achämeniden* (1911) 121.

³⁸ Persepolis I, pl. 98 (crown with thick brim); pls. 96–99, 102–107 (crowns without any or with a thin brim).

³⁹ Von Gall 1974, 154: 'Man könnte daher für die Reliefs des Hundertsäulensaales vermuten, daß auf dem verbreiterten Rand Stufenzinnen entweder aufgemalt waren, wie in den Süddurchgängen oder auf den Metallfolien, die die Könige der Norddurchgänge trugen, eingraviert waren'. Schmidt (Persepolis I, 133) also reconstructs crenelated brims.

⁴⁰ Von Gall 1974, 155, fig. 2. Von Gall compares this type of crown with the headdress of a little statue which is a part of the Oxus-treasure.

stone. However, this would be no satisfying solution in the case of the southern porticoes where the brims were certainly no technical device since the crowns were decorated with paint. One could suggest that the crowns in the southern porticoes were originally planned to be decorated with metal ornaments but in fact were only painted provisionally. A metal ornament seems more appropriate for an official building like the hundred column hall.

Otherwise one may also assume that the crown with brim indeed was slightly different from that of Xerxes and Dareios. Artaxerxes' crown could even have been the result of some new 'fashion' for the royal headgear, although this does not seem to be very convincing. In any case the brim can hardly be regarded as a new distinctive element, intentionally added to Artaxerxes' crown. In almost every case this brim is very thin, and would not have been noticed as an distinctive element. The brim, moreover, only occurs in the hundred column hall and the tripylon, and is attested nowhere else on an Achaemenid crown: neither in Persepolis, nor on the royal tombs, nor on seals or coins or on any other piece of Achaemenian art.

The tripylon in Persepolis traditionally was assigned to Xerxes I.⁴¹ The reliefs of the king with the crown prince standing behind him, all picture crowns with slits for metal ornaments on both sides. The brims at the upper part of these crowns are very thin (*Taf. 18,2*). Nonetheless, von Gall did not identify this type of crown as Artaxerxes' crown, but followed the general consensus that the tripylon was built by Xerxes.⁴²

Calmeyer, however, reported some evidence for assigning the tripylon to Artaxerxes I.⁴³ In that case, it is likely that the tripylon was built later than the hundred column hall since at the time the latter was constructed, there was not yet any adult heir to the throne, but there was one at the time the tripylon was constructed. Apparently one of Artaxerxes' sons had reached adolescence meanwhile.⁴⁴

If we apply the thesis of Artaxerxes' personal crown to the reliefs of the tripylon, it must be concluded that the 'thick brim' of the hundred column hall, the characteristic feature of Artaxerxes' crown, developed after some years into the very thin brim of the tripylon. This would be strange for an essential element of a personal crown.

Again, it is not unlikely that the tripylon crowns were similar to Dareios' and Xerxes' crown. In each of the slits on both sides of the crowns there are three holes, indicating that the metal ornament consisted of two or three bands (*Taf. 18,1*). Since the slits extend above the crowns (including brims) it is quite possible that Artaxerxes' crown in the tripylon originally looked exactly like that of his father and grandfather.

Finally, the reliefs of the northern tripylon staircase show an interesting detail. One of the nobles ascending the staircase, apparently an old man, surprisingly wears a crenelated crown⁴⁵ I have no

⁴¹ Ernst Herzfeld even assigned the building to Dareios.

⁴² Von Gall's argument might have been that at the tripylon the very thin brim was shown for the first time. Artaxerxes would have developed this brim, made it thicker and used it as an element of his personal crown.

⁴³ P. Calmeyer, *Synarchie*, AMI N. F. 9, 1976, 71 ff. Cf. Roaf 1983.

⁴⁴ Mention should be made here of the jambs of the southern doorways of the hundred column hall. In each of these doorways the opposing jambs both show a king sitting on his throne which is borne by 14 thronebearers. Since the king's throne usually is borne by 28 thronebearers, it may be assumed that the thronebearers on one jambs are to be added to those on the opposing one, making a total of 28.

Knowing that the two groups of thronebearers on the opposing jambs of the southern doorways are to be added to each other, we might assume as well that not one, but two persons are depicted sitting on the throne. Are these the king and his crown-prince? I do not think so for two reasons. First: if two separate persons had to be depicted, they *both* would have had the usual number of 28 thronebearers, not 14. Secondly, on other reliefs in Persepolis, crown-princes always stand behind the throne, but never sit on it. This seems to be a privilege of the king.

Apparently the two groups of thronebearers on the opposing jambs should indeed be added to each other, but it is very unlikely that such applies to the kings as well. These two kings are just two representations of the same person.

⁴⁵ See Roaf 1983, pl. XXXV and p. 78: 'Is this the whim of the sculptor who was bored with carving the same leaf-crown

explanation to offer. It seems unlikely that this figure represents the king or the crown prince, for they are depicted on the inner reliefs of the tripylon. Could one of the princes have mingled with the nobles?

3.5 Conclusion

The reliefs of Persepolis do not give many arguments in support of the thesis on personal crowns of Dareios, Xerxes and Artaxerxes I. Since painted decoration and metal ornaments all have disappeared, it is impossible to say what the crowns originally looked like. Conclusions such as 'Xerxes wore a high, undecorated, cylindrical crown' have no basis in the available evidence.

Metal ornaments were fully elaborated before attachment to the crowns on the reliefs. They were attached to the stone by means of slits and holes. Various techniques were used in the tačara, both with and without crenelations or peaks cut out into the stone to support the metal crenelations. In the latter case the crenelations were free standing, which was possible if the ornament was rather thick. Free standing crenelations are at least a possibility for Xerxes' and Artaxerxes' crowns. This would explain why the slits on both sides of these crowns all extend beyond the carved crowns. Furthermore it may be assumed that all metal ornaments attached to the crowns in Persepolis consisted of two or three different bands.

If Xerxes wore an uncrenelated personal crown, it is hard to imagine that it took the shape of a cylinder, since common Persians wear the same headdress. Crenelations, moreover, seem to have had a certain importance in Achaemenian iconography and possibly had a protective, if not religious character. The brim of Artaxerxes' crown can hardly have been the characteristic element of his personal crown.

It does not seem unlikely that Dareios' crenelated band at Bīsotūn was combined with a (probably common Persian) cylindrical headdress. This combination probably remained the usual shape

of the crown. Since the metal ornaments attached to the reliefs of Xerxes and Artaxerxes all consisted of three different bands, it is likely that their crowns were made up of a cylinder and a crenelated band as well. The same could be applied to the crowns that were decorated with paint. Such a similarity between the crowns is consistent with the continuity which is such a characteristic feature of Achaemenian art.

4 THE SO-CALLED 'WINGED GENIUS' IN PERSEPOLIS

The 'winged genius' and the crown it wears have an obvious relevance to the discussion of the crowns of the royal tombs. The various 'winged genii' on the reliefs of Persepolis will first be dealt with.⁴⁶

On all the reliefs in the tripylon on which the king is shown, there also is a 'winged genius', looking in the same direction.⁴⁷ Both wear the same cylindrical crown with a very thin brim. Unlike the king's crown, however, the crown of the 'winged genius' does not have slits. It apparently did lack any metal ornaments. This also applies to the crown of the 'winged genius' in the hundred column hall. Originally there was a 'winged genius' above each king in this building, but only four of them are left.⁴⁸ Apart from those in the tripylon and in the hundred column hall, there is only one more 'winged genius' depicted in Persepolis, i.e. on the relief of the western

time after time? Although in general the nobles do not seem to be portraits, is this an exception, and was this intended to be the Figure of a prince? The corresponding Figure on the East landing has a leaf-crown. If this headdress was not carved according to the plan of the designer, it is one of the most blatant examples of the personal choice of the sculptor.'

⁴⁶ I will not consider the winged genius of the Bīsotūn relief here. Because of its deviating headdress it will be discussed together with the sphinxes and 'bull-men' on the reliefs of Persepolis.

⁴⁷ Persepolis I, pls. 75-79.

⁴⁸ Tilia II, pls. XXII, 14-15. XXIII, 16-17. Two of these 'winged genii' were restored to their original place by the Tilia's (XXII, 14 and XXIII, 16). Besides these there are frag-

staircase to the hadiṣh court.⁴⁹ This is the only one that is not accompanied by a king. It is, however, flanked on both sides by crowned sphinxes that, as we shall see, may have the same iconographical value as a king.⁵⁰

Tilia discovered many traces of paint on the 'winged genius' of the tripylon and the hundred column hall and she was able to reconstruct the colouring.⁵¹ According to her reconstructions, the crown of the 'winged genius' was originally painted gold.⁵² Traces of paint, however, were discovered only on its body and wings. The reconstructed colours of the head, beard and crown are therefore purely hypothetical. It indeed seems highly probable that the crown was painted gold, but patterns in black or other colours cannot be excluded. It is even possible that the 'winged genius' wore a crenelated crown, although this, I admit, is entirely hypothetical as well.

The reason for stressing this possibility is the plausible relation between the king and the 'winged genius'. For a long time the 'winged genius' was regarded as a representation of Ahura Mazda. Nowadays a number of scholars reject this view. They consider the 'winged genius' as a representation of the *hvarnah*, the royal blessing, royal prosperity or kingship in general.⁵³ It has even been argued that the 'winged genius' represents the king himself, in another shape.⁵⁴

Except for one case the 'winged genius' always accompanies a king, looks in the same direction and wears some sort of crown. Whatever the 'winged genius' actually represents, he seems to have had a connection with kingship. Both he and the king are iconographically of the same, royal rank. It is however unlikely that 'winged genius' and king expressed their royalty by means of different iconographical marks: the king by means of a crenelated crown, the 'winged genius' by means of an uncrenelated cylinder. It seems more likely that, when depicted together and looking in the same direction, they both wore the same type of crown. This will be important in the subsequent discussion on the tomb reliefs.

5 THE ROYAL TOMBS AT NAQSH-I RUSTAM AND PERSEPOLIS

Unlike the reliefs of Persepolis, the reliefs of the royal tombs were never meant to be observed from nearby.⁵⁵ They therefore will be discussed separately. There are seven royal tombs: four in the rock of Naqsh-i Rustam and three cut out in the flank of the Kuh-i Rahmat, east of Persepolis. The reliefs of these seven tombs are identical (except for minor details) and consist each of three panels. The relief of the upper panel depicts the king, standing in front of a fire altar. Above this scene, like on the relief of Bīsotūn, is a 'winged genius'.

Only one of the tombs, that of Dareios I., is to be identified by an inscription (DNa-b). Tomb II might, however, be assigned to Xerxes I on the basis of stylistic evidence.⁵⁶ Schmidt has tried to assign all the tombs to the various kings, although the evidence is hardly adequate.⁵⁷ Tomb VII, to the south-east of the Persepolis terrace, was never finished and is therefore of little importance to the present discussion. It is possible that the tomb reliefs were originally decorated with paint. Schmidt discovered traces of colour on the relief of Dareios' tomb and suggested that the whole relief, except for the (white) background, had been coloured.⁵⁸ Such traces of paint were not discovered on the other reliefs, but this may have

ments of four more 'winged genii' belonging to the doorways of the hundred column hall (Tilia II, pls. XXI, XXIV, 18-19, XXV). It should be noted that the 'winged genius' never accompanied the so called 'royal hero'.

⁴⁹ Ibid. Plate 160 and Calmeyer⁵³ Taf. 20.

⁵⁰ There seem to be traces of 'winged genii' on the staircases of the tačara of Dareios. These 'winged genii' were also accompanied by sphinxes.

⁵¹ Tilia II, 34-35, figs. 1 a-b, pls. A-B.

⁵² Ibid 40.

⁵³ See e.g. P. Calmeyer 1974, 233-242.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 235: 'We cannot avoid the conclusion that, in all these cases, he represents the king himself.'

⁵⁵ Roaf 1983, 128: 'Their carving is grosser and their finish less refined.'

⁵⁶ See on this Persepolis III, 93.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 79-107.

⁵⁸ Ibid. 83-84.

been due to oversight, as Schmidt himself admitted.⁵⁹

The king on the relief of tomb I (Dareios I) obviously wears a crenelated crown. (*Taf. 18,3*)⁶⁰ The crown of the 'winged genius' seems to show traces of crenelations (*Taf. 18,4*). Schmidt is unsure whether the crown is crenelated or not.⁶¹

Schmidt's doubts notwithstanding, the king's crown of tomb II (Xerxes?) is also crenelated, as can be clearly seen on von Gall's photograph (*Taf. 18,5*)⁶² The 'winged genius' wears the same type of crenelated crown (*Taf. 18,6*).

Unfortunately, the king on the relief of tomb III is poorly preserved, so that it cannot be surely established what kind of crown he wears.⁶³ According to Schmidt the better preserved crown of the 'winged genius' (*Taf. 19,1*) gives an 'indication of crenelations'.⁶⁴

The relief of tomb IV, the last one at Naqsh-e Rostam, again pictures a king with a crenelated crown (*Taf. 19,2*).⁶⁵ The 'winged genius' is poorly preserved. On the site, it seemed to me that traces of low crenelations are visible on top of it, but I am not sure about this.⁶⁶

On the extremely well-preserved relief of tomb V (at Persepolis), the king wears a cylindrical crown with a crenelated band around it (*Taf. 19,3*).⁶⁷ The 'winged genius' too wears a crenelated crown.⁶⁸

Only on tomb VI the king wears an undecorated cylindrical crown without crenelations (*Taf. 19,4*),⁶⁹ similar to the one of the 'winged genius' on this relief (*Taf. 19,5*).⁷⁰

Tomb VII remained unfinished. Due to a crack in the stone surface, the crown of the king was apparently not carved into the stone but made separately and inserted in the rock.⁷¹ Unfortunately this crown has not been preserved. The 'winged genius' does wear a crown, but this is obviously unfinished.⁷² Evidently tomb VII cannot be used in the present study.

Summing up the seven royal tombs and the

various crowns worn by the kings and 'winged genii' are listed in the following table:

tomb	king	'winged genious'
I	crenelated crown	crenelated crown (?)
II	crenelated crown	crenelated crown
III	poorly preserved	crenelated crown (?)
IV	crenelated crown	crenelated crown (??)
V	crenelated crown	crenelated crown
VI	uncrenelated crown	uncrenelated crown
VII	not preserved	unfinished

Two of the reliefs (II, V) show a king and a 'winged genius' who wear the same crenelated crown. Their royal rank is expressed by means of the same headdress, as was also suggested for the kings and 'winged genii' in Persepolis. The same may apply to tombs I and IV. On the reliefs of these tombs the king wears a crenelated crown;

⁵⁹ Ibid. 92: 'It should be added, however, that, possibly through oversight, we noted no traces of pigments on the tombs of the successors of Darius I.'

⁶⁰ See also: Persepolis III, 84, pl. 19; von Gall 1974, *Taf. 34.1*.

⁶¹ Persepolis III, 85.

⁶² Ibid. 92; see also pl. 42; von Gall 1974, *Taf. 34.2*.

⁶³ Persepolis III, 95, pl. 49.

⁶⁴ Ibid. 95: 'The god's Figure (= the 'winged genius', W. H.), shown in the usual way, is partly abraded, but a faintly jagged portion at the top of the hat may indicate that it was crenelated like the cidaris of Darius I.' See also: P. Calmeyer/W. Kleiss, *Das unvollendete Felsgrab bei Persepolis*, AMI NF 8, 1975, *Taf. 21.1*.

⁶⁵ See also Persepolis III, 97-98, pl. 57; von Gall 1974, *Taf. 35.3*.

⁶⁶ As far as I know, a good photograph of this crown was never published. The only photographs that I have seen are part of the collection of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (D. A. I.) in Berlin.

⁶⁷ See also Persepolis III, pl. 63; von Gall 1974, *Taf. 35.1*.

⁶⁸ I had a photograph from Prof. Calmeyer at my disposal, on which crenelations are clearly visible. The photograph in P. Calmeyer 1974, 242, fig. 8b is less clear.

⁶⁹ See also Persepolis III, 106, pl. 70; von Gall 1974, *Taf. 35.2*.

⁷⁰ I know this crown only from photographs of the D. A. I.

⁷¹ Information given by Prof. P. Calmeyer. See also Calmeyer/Kleiss⁶⁴ 81-98.

⁷² Persepolis III, pl. 78; von Gall 1974, *Tafel 35.4*.

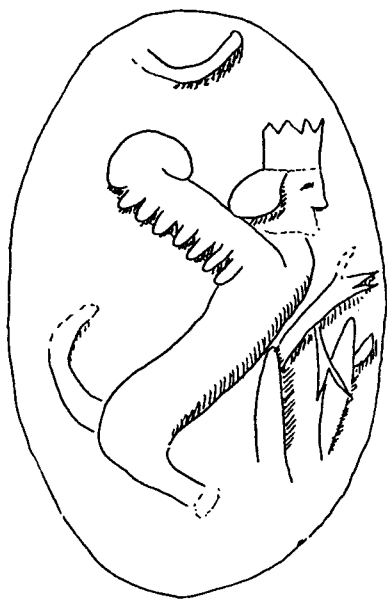


Abb. 2. Seal impression of a sphinx wearing a crenelated crown (PT 7 67). Drawing (W. Henkelman) after Schmidt Persepolis II pl. 17 (PT 7 67).

the 'winged genius' probably also does, but this is unsure. After having observed that king and 'winged genius', when depicted together on the reliefs of tombs II and V, were marked in the same manner, we may assume that the 'winged genii' of tombs I and IV indeed wore crenelated crowns.

To these four reliefs, on which king and 'winged genius' both seem to wear a crenelated crown, we may add tomb III. The king's crown on this relief is poorly preserved, but the 'winged genius' wears a crown that seems to be crenelated.

This leaves only tomb VI to be considered, on which both king and 'winged genius' wear an uncrenelated crown (Taf. 19,5). Since the surface of the relief is very smooth, I would not exclude the possibility that crenelations once had been painted on these crowns. In any case, the relief of tomb VI confirms that king and 'winged genius', when depicted together, wore the same head-dress.

Apparently the crenelated crown was used during the whole period of Achaemenid reign. As has already been said, the relief of tomb V is the best preserved one. The king on this relief wears a high cylinder with a crenelated band around it. This type of crown is quite similar to the *tačara* crowns and might express a similar combination of an existing cylindrical headdress with the crenelated band of Bīsotūn. Possibly all the kings and 'winged genii' on the tomb reliefs may originally have worn this combined headdress.⁷³ In any case the tomb reliefs do not provide any argument in favour of the idea of a personal crown.

6 ACHAEMENIAN COINS

In this section I will discuss two types of coins, the golden *dareikos* and the silver *siglos*. Both were first minted during the reign of Dareios I. (521–486 B. C.). There have been several attempts to classify the various types of these coins.⁷⁴ Most scholars however agree on the following main types of both the *dareikoi* and the *sigloi* (in chronological order):

- I archer, only the upper part of the body is depicted.
- II archer in the kneeling-running pose.
- III walking archer with spear.
- IV walking archer with dagger.

All the archers on the coins wear crenelated crowns which vary slightly in height. The number of the crenelations is 3, 4 or 5. Sometimes the crenelations are not clearly outlined and appear

⁷³ H. Koch, 'Medische' Kappen und andere alte Hüte. In: H. Koch, Achämeniden. Studien (1993) 128 also suggested that all crowns on the tomb reliefs originally were crenelated. It is worth noticing that most of the crenelations that are still visible (especially those on the king's crown of tomb V) have been cut out quite superficially, so that they would disappear quickly as a result of erosion.

⁷⁴ See I. Carradice, 'The "Regal" Coinage of the Persian Empire in: I. Carradice (ed.) Coinage and Administration in the Athenian and Persian Empires. The ninth Oxford Symposium on Coinage and Monetary History = BAR 343 (1987) 73–107, pls. X–XV.

as mere peaks.⁷⁵ The crenelations and peaks also vary slightly in height. According to D. Stronach these differences are at least partly due to the small scale.⁷⁶ Moreover all variations and types cover periods of time either quite long or very short. Therefore one can exclude that the archers were portraits of the reigning king.⁷⁷ The fact, moreover, that Alexander the Great had coins minted, depicting the same archer, makes it highly unlikely that this man was the portrait of a particular king. As Calmeyer pointed out, Alexander would never have used the portrait of one of the Achaemenids.⁷⁸

Calmeyer suggested that the archer may represent a legendary or semi-historic king, like Kyros, Teispes, Achaimenes or even Perseus. Stronach also rejects the view that the archers are personal portraits of kings. He points out that Dareios I. was the first king who minted Achaemenian coins. On the relief on the rock of Bīsotūn this king carries a bow and in Aischylos' *Persai* he is called the 'first archer'.⁷⁹ Therefore the archer would be Dareios, the founder of the new Achaemenid dynasty. According to Stronach, his portrait was depicted on all the coins during the whole Achaemenid reign, as a sign of the continuity of the monarchy.

Regardless of the historical identity of the figure, it is obvious that the archer is a royal person. The iconographic mark of his kingship is the crenelated crown. Since clearly no individual kings are depicted, I would like to propose that the archer is a representation of either kingship in general or 'the king' without any reference to a particular monarch. This would fit very well with one of the main characteristics of the art and inscriptions of the Achaemenid empire. The Old-Persian inscriptions may be characterized as programmatic (i. e. representing an ideal state of affairs) or a-historical (i. e. without specific references to historical events and people).⁸⁰ Symbolisation of dynastic continuity seems to prevail in Achaemenian art. The crowned archer on the coins should therefore not to be seen as the portrait of one individual king but as a portrait of *the* king. The archer may express the idea that *the* king, the

'first archer', protects his empire and his people. Likewise, the reliefs of the royal tombs may be meant to express dynastic continuity as well. This would explain why the reliefs of tombs II–VII were almost exact copies of the relief of tomb I. The kings depicted on the reliefs may not represent individual monarchs but, again, *the* king of the Persians acting in a ceremony in front of a fire-altar, greeting the 'winged genius'. If we except this, it is very likely that all kings on the tomb reliefs, like the kings on the coins, wore a crenelated crown, the mark of continuous Achaemenid kingship.⁸¹

7 SEALS AND SEAL IMPRESSIONS

The iconography of Achaemenian seals and seal impressions is more complicated than the iconography of reliefs and coins. Although the crenelated crown prevails, various headdresses are worn (probably not all of them crowns). Occasionally a crenelated crown is worn by two men on the same seal. In addition, women, 'winged genii', bull-men, sphinxes, and a 'scorpio-man' are sometimes depicted with this type of crown.

Since sphinxes and bull-men have thus far been left out of the discussion on the crowns, it is necessary here first to study the sphinxes and

⁷⁵ Peaks as a representation of stepped crenelations were already usual in Elamite art (Porada²⁹ 4).

⁷⁶ Stronach 1989, 256–279, pls. I–IV.

⁷⁷ Ibid. 267–269. The fact that there are four different types may have artistic reasons only.

⁷⁸ P. Calmeyer, *Toxotai*, AMI 12, 1979, 303–313.

⁷⁹ Aischylos, *Persai* vv. 554–557. See also Stronach 1989, 269.

⁸⁰ See especially H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, *Yaunā en Persai. Grieken en Perzen in een ander Perspectief* (Leiden 1980) 1–47. Even the Bīsotūn inscription is only partly a historical document. It contains a number of formulaic expressions that are repeated in the other Achaemenian inscriptions.

⁸¹ Von Gall did not use the evidence from Achaemenian coins, assuming that coins 'have their own rules.' (von Gall 1974, 140, n. 37). I cannot see why there would be separate rules for reliefs and coins. It is hard to imagine that there were two different ideological programs, one for the coins and one for the rest of Achaemenian art.

bull-men on the Persepolis reliefs as they have an obvious relevance to these figures on the seals.

Xerxes' 'Gateway of all Lands' in Persepolis is guarded by two enormous winged bull-men who may be compared to the Assyrian *lamassu*.⁸² They wear a headdress which is usually called a 'horned polos'. This polos is a cylindrical head-dress of Mesopotamian origin, the upper part of which consisted of feathers.⁸³ The bull-men of the capitals of the columns in the tripylon also wear this type of headdress.⁸⁴ All sphinxes in Persepolis, moreover, wear a horned polos (*Taf. 19,6*)⁸⁵ It seems that all poloi in Persepolis were decorated with a rosette band.⁸⁶ The horned polos was originally reserved for the gods.⁸⁷ It is not clear whether the headdresses of the bull-men and the sphinxes in Persepolis still were representative of divine status, but they must at least have been the expression of a high rank and probably still had some religious meaning.

Unlike those on the Persepolis relief, the sphinxes and bull-men depicted on Achaemenian seals never wear a horned polos, but usually wear a crenelated crown. Only some of the seals depicting sphinxes or bull-men can be discussed here. Several times 'bull-men' with crenelated crowns are represented sitting on both sides of a man (on one of the seals also wearing a crenelated crown).⁸⁸ One impression shows a four-winged creature (probably bareheaded) fighting against a bull-man wearing a crenelated crown.⁸⁹ Another scene is that of a figure, standing on a bull-man (both apparently wearing a crenelated crown) who fights against a winged bull.⁹⁰ Sphinxes wearing crenelated crowns are depicted on a number of seals (*Abb. 2*).⁹¹ One seal shows the god Bes (?), standing on two sphinxes (wearing crenelated crowns), who is accompanied by a 'winged genius' and a man, both wearing a crenelated crown.⁹²

There are some sphinxes and bull-men who do not wear a crenelated crown⁹³ and a few others wearing a cylindrical crown with a globule.⁹⁴ However, most of the sphinxes and the bull-men on seals and seal impressions do wear crenelated

crowns. As we have seen, contrary to that their counterparts on the reliefs in Persepolis wear a horned polos. This seems to suggest that the horned polos seen on the reliefs and the crenelated crown depicted on seals at least have the same iconographic value.⁹⁵ If so, this would confirm the suggested importance of crenelations.

A few more seals will be discussed here. One of the major problems in interpreting the scenes depicted on them is the uncertainty whether or not a royal or divine figure is represented. Seals depicting non-royal figures are of course of no importance to the present study.

One of the most well-known Achaemenian seals, found in Egypt and (according to the inscription,

⁸² Persepolis I, pls. 9.11.12 b.

⁸³ Luschey 1968, 80-81.

⁸⁴ Persepolis I, 112 fig. 54; 133 fig. 55. F. Krefter (Persepolis. Rekonstruktionen = *TehForsch III* (1971) Beilage 8-9; 17) reconstructed a number of 'bull-men' in the hundred column hall and the 'Bankettsaale der Armee.'

⁸⁵ Sphinxes are depicted on the following reliefs: two on the central relief of the eastern apadana staircase; two on the central relief of the northern tripylon staircase; two on the relief of the western staircase near the hadish of Xerxes; one on the relief of the southern staircase of the *taçara* of Dareios. See: Persepolis I, Plates 22; 63; 160; 127. On a relief made of glazed bricks in Susa two sphinxes also wearing the *horned polos* are to be seen. See R. Mecquenem, *Contribution à l'étude du palais achéménide de Suse* = MDP 30 (1947) 58, fig. 32 and P. Amiet, *Suse: 6000 ans d'histoire* (1988) 132, fig. 83.

⁸⁶ Sometimes only a band can be seen. Originally rosettes could have been painted on it.

⁸⁷ See H. Luschey, 1968, 81.

⁸⁸ Persepolis II, 20. pl. 4.IV-V and 18 pl. 3.I (man combatting a griffin, both sitting on bull-men wearing a crenelated crown).

⁸⁹ Ibid. 32; pl. 11, No. 38.

⁹⁰ Pope VII, pl. 123, G.

⁹¹ See also *ibid.* Plate 124g; G. Perrot/Ch. Chipiez, *Histoire de l'Art dans l'Antiquité*. vol. V (1890) 504, fig. 833.

⁹² Pope VII, pl. 123, B.

⁹³ Persepolis II, 25, Plate 5, X-XIII; Frankfort, 1939, 220-223, Plate XXXVI, B.

⁹⁴ On two seals: Persepolis II, 20, pl. 4, No. 5 (with an inscription of Xerxes) and Pope VII, pl. 123, K. As Prof. P. Calmeyer suggested to me, this type of headdress might have been inspired by Urartian crowns.

⁹⁵ We might compare to this to the reliefs depicting a 'winged genius': on the Bisotūn relief the genius wears a Urartian headdress (which originally was a reference to divinity), but most of his counterparts on the royal tomb reliefs wear a crenelated crown.



Abb. 3. Pazyryk, piece of textile depicting crowned Achaemenian women, after S. I. Rudenko *The frozen Tombs of Siberia, the Pazyryk Burials of Iron Age Horsemen*. (London 1979) 297, fig. 139.

SDa) belonging to Dareios I., shows the king hunting a lion.⁹⁶ Both the king and the accompanying 'winged genius' wear a crenelated crown. The most clearly outlined crown, Dareios', is easily recognisable as a crenelated band with circular ornaments (rosettes?). This type of crown is identical to the crenelated band of Bīsotūn (that, on the reliefs of Persepolis, was possibly combined with a cylinder). The crenelated band is also shown on a number of other seals.⁹⁷

It needs to be emphasised that there are no seals or seal impressions showing an 'undecorated cylindrical crown', not even the seals used during the reign of Xerxes or bearing an inscription of this king.⁹⁸ There are some figures wearing a 'fluted tiara', a ribbed cylindrical headdress, but

one can reasonably exclude that this was a royal headdress.⁹⁹ Hundreds of figures on the reliefs of Persepolis wear a fluted tiara, which must have been a common Persian headdress. It may therefore be doubted whether a king is depicted on the so-called Zvenigorodskij seal (*Taf. 16, 2*). This seal shows a man with the fluted tiara who is

⁹⁶ Frankfort 1939, 220–223, pl. XXXVII D.

⁹⁷ Persepolis II, 19, pl. 3, No. 3; 23, pl. 5, No. 11; 24, pl. 6, No. 16; Frankfort 1939, 220–223, Plate XXXVI, N; Perrot/Chipiez⁹¹ 833, fig. 501.

⁹⁸ See Persepolis II, the seals numbered 1–2, 6, 8, 14, 16, 26 all show a crenelated crown. They were used in the reign of Xerxes. The seals numbered 4 and 5 that show a crenelated crown as well, were used during the reigns of Dareios/Xerxes and Xerxes/Artaxerxes respectively.

⁹⁹ e.g. *ibid.* 27, pl. 7, No. 22.

leading four captives and killing another man crowned in a Pharaonic manner.¹⁰⁰ As the fluted tiara is a common headdress not expressing any royalty, it is unlikely that the man wearing this fluted tiara is a king.¹⁰¹ On the contrary, a seal showing a man with a crenelated crown leading three Greek-looking captives and killing another one, must be a representation of a king or other royal person.¹⁰² The same applies to a seal with an inscription of Artaxerxes (III.?) showing a man wearing a crenelated crown and leading three captives (*Taf. 16,3*).¹⁰³

The difference between figures wearing a crenelated crown and figures who do not, is shown by two seals on which both are seen.¹⁰⁴ The first depicts a man wearing a crenelated crown, a bare-headed priest (?) and two lions. The second seal shows a bareheaded man fighting against a griffin, and a man wearing the crenelated crown fighting against a lion. On these seals the crenelated crown is apparently used as a distinctive element. A person not wearing it cannot have the same rank as one who does.

There are a few seals portraying women. One of them shows a goddess surrounded by a nimbus who standing on a lion, who is approached by a man.¹⁰⁵ Both man and goddess seem to wear a crenelated crown. Two seals depict an enthroned woman.¹⁰⁶ One of them resembles the scene of a royal audience as seen on the treasury reliefs in Persepolis. The enthroned woman is offered a bird by an attendant. Another woman, wearing a crenelated crown, stands in front of her. Between them, like on the treasury reliefs, stands a censer. A scorio-man depicted on only one seal, wears a crenelated crown and hunts a bull. This apparently is a 'royal creature' like the bull-men and the sphinxes.¹⁰⁷

Achaemenian seals and seal impressions, then, do not confirm the thesis of a personal crown. Xerxes' 'undecorated cylinder' was never depicted. On the contrary the crenelated crown prevails and is used to distinguish people and creatures of a high rank. Furthermore it is likely that the horned polos, which must have been an indication of a high rank too, had the same iconographic value

as the crenelated crown. The crenelated band worn by Dareios on the relief of the rock of Bisotūn is rendered on a number of seals.

8 OTHER REPRESENTATIONS OF THE CRENELATED CROWN

As it is well known, there are no women on the reliefs of Persepolis. They are however portrayed on some seals discussed in the previous section. A textile fragment from Pazyryk (now in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg) shows (in clear Achaemenian style) four women wearing crenelated crowns (*Abb. 3*).¹⁰⁸ They may be princesses.

¹⁰⁰ also W. Nagel, *Datierte Glyptik aus Alt-Vorderasien*, AfO 20, 1963, 131, fig. 11; M. J. Ménant, *Recherches sur la glyptique Orientale*. Vol II: *Cylindres de l'Assyrie, Médie, Asia-Mineure, Perse, Égypte et la Phénicie* (Paris 1886) 168-170, fig. 147, Plate IX.1.

¹⁰¹ An Egyptian crown is also worn by a winged man depicted only once (Persepolis II, 39, n. 132, Plate 13. LXV). This figure reminds of the genius with four wings on a relief in Pasargadae who wears this crown as well. See D. Stronach, *Pasargadae*. (1978) pls. 43-46.

¹⁰² As the man is holding a spear with a knob, he is likely to be considered as a member of the corps of 'mēlophoroi' (apple-bearers), the royal guards who are depicted on the Persepolis reliefs for a number of times. Combined with the fact that the man is wearing a fluted tiara, this makes it very unlikely that this person is a king.

The seal could have been used by a satrap or military commander. In that case it might depict a historical event. It seems however more likely to me that this seal does not depict any particular Persian man or event like the invasion of Egypt. I prefer considering it as an expression of a timeless, ideal state of affairs, often seen in Achaemenian art. The man leading captives and killing an enemy may even be compared to the rather unspecific 'Persian man' whose spear 'has gone forth far' and who has 'delivered battle far indeed from Persia', who is mentioned in the inscription on Dareios' tomb in Naqsh-e Rostam (DNa, lines 43-47).

¹⁰³ See also Nagel¹⁰⁰ 131, fig. 13; A. S. Strelkov, *The Moscow Artaxerxes Cylinder Seal*, *Bulletin of the American Institute for Iranian Art and Archaeology* V.1, 1937, 17-21.

¹⁰⁴ Pope VII, pls. 123, C and L.

¹⁰⁵ Nagel¹⁰⁰ 1963, 131, fig. 12.

¹⁰⁶ Pope VII, pl. 124 and Frankfort 1939, 220-223, pl. XXXVII, E.

¹⁰⁷ Pope VII, pl. 123, N.

¹⁰⁸ See for a recent discussion: K. Robinson, *The Textiles from Pazyryk*, *Expedition* 32.1, 1990, 49-61, figs. 10-11; J. Lerner, *Some so-called Achaemenid Objects from Pazyryk*, *Source. Notes on the History of Art* X.4, 1991, 8-15, fig. 11.

We might compare a beautiful portrait of a Parthian queen (Musa?) wearing a crenelated crown¹⁰⁹ to these crowned 'Achaemenian' women. The crenelations on the crown of the Parthian queen could have had the same significance still. It is, however, equally possible that they were a deliberate archaism.¹¹⁰

On two cedar beams, quite recently discovered in Munich, some Achaemenian scenes are painted.¹¹¹ The colours and contours of the paintings (dated 500 B. C.) are reasonably well preserved. An *ekphora* and a battle scene are shown. The latter scene depicts both horsemen (wearing the 'Median' or Aryan dress, usually worn for military purposes) and pedestrians (wearing the 'Persian' or Elamite dress, usually worn for non-military, especially stately occasions). The pedestrians wear a cylindrical headdress consisting of different bands. Crenelations, although rather vague, can be discerned on top of the upper band.¹¹² The Munich crowns remind us of the *tačara* crowns that also consisted of several bands and had crenelations on top of them.

There finally is a small head of a young, beardless Persian boy (or girl), in Egyptian blue.¹¹³ This boy wears a crenelated crown, indicative of his royal rank. Von Gall attempts to show that this piece of art does not represent a crown-prince, but king Arses (338–336 B. C.) who ascended the Achaemenid throne at a very young age.¹¹⁴ It is, however, unnecessary to assign this head to a particular royal person. In view of the characteristics of Achaemenian iconography in general, it seems more likely that this piece of art was to represent the timeless face of 'a prince or princess of the Achaemenid line'. Even if it was meant as a personal portrait, we cannot avoid the conclusion that the Achaemenian artist was already that far on his way to a non-naturalistic or even abstract art, that it was possible for him to represent the head of a prince or king, including the face, completely in blue material.¹¹⁵

9 CONCLUSION

There do not seem to be many arguments in favour of a personal crown in the Achaemenian period. The supposedly different types are, in fact, only represented on the Persepolis reliefs. These reliefs, however, are far from solid evidence, since it is quite uncertain how any of these Persepolis crowns originally looked and with which metal ornament they were adorned.

A high undecorated cylindrical headdress as a personal crown of Xerxes seems unlikely since this headdress is worn by common Persians as well. The uncrenelated cylinder is nowhere attested as a royal crown: neither on the tomb reliefs, nor on seals or coins, nor on any other piece of Achaemenian art. The same applies for the brim on Artaxerxes' crown, which is also known only from Persepolis. This brim often is so thin that it can hardly have been a distinctive element.

In general the theory of a personal crown does not fit with the characteristics of Achaemenian art. This art did not produce historical scenes, nor did it render portraits of particular persons. It is not without reason that the relief of Dareios' tomb in Naqsh-e Rostam was copied meticu-

¹⁰⁹ R. Ghirshman, Iran. From the earliest times to the Islamic conquest (1954) 279, pl. 33 b; CHI 3.2, pl. 65.

¹¹⁰ G. Azarpay, Crowns and some royal insignia in early Iran, *Iranica Antiqua* 9, 1972, 108–115 points out that the crenelations on the crown of the Sasanid Shapur I are such an deliberate archaism. It is interesting to notice that both Anahita and Ahura Mazda wore a 'city crown' or a crenelated crown in Sasanian times. See R. Göbl, *Sasanidische Numismatik* (1968) 7.

¹¹¹ Published by P. Calmeyer, *Zwei mit historischen Szenen bemalte Balken der Achämenidenzeit* = *Münchener Jahrbuch der Bildenden Kunst* III, Folge XLIII (1992) 7–18.

¹¹² I was only able to see these crenelations by inspection of the actual cedar beams in the *Prähistorische Staatssammlung* in Munich.

¹¹³ E. Porada, *Ancient Iran. The Art of Pre-Islamic Times* (1965) 160–162, pl. 45.

¹¹⁴ Von Gall 1974, 158–9.

¹¹⁵ See Porada¹¹³ 162: 'A new problem is also posed by the blue colour of the head. Statues and statuettes of the pre-Achaemenid period which were made as religious images or as votive figures sometimes have hair and beard of blue lapis lazuli but not a blue face.'

lously by each of his successors. The kings on the Persepolis reliefs all look alike, there is even no distinction between kings and crown princes. Traces of paint on the garments of the kings show that even the colours were copied in detail. Both the tomb and the Persepolis reliefs therefore seem to show a rather timeless line of 'monarchs', rather than a series of portraits of individual kings. The same applies to Achaemenian seals and, especially, to Achaemenian coins.

These characteristics of Achaemenian art alone make it likely that the Achaemenid crown was a dynastic one. Crenelations were indeed used as a distinctive element. They probably had the same value as the horned polos which must have indicated a certain important rank and possibly also had a religious meaning. Long before the reign of the Achaemenids crenelations already had a symbolic connotation and we may assume that they still were a 'sacred and protective symbol' when Persepolis was built.

Dareios, the 're-founder' of the Persian Empire, wore a crown with crenelations on top of it. Not only his crown had crenelations: the whole terrace of Persepolis was topped with them. All 'kings' and 'royal archers' on Achaemenian coins wear a crenelated crown. This crown seems to be the only royal headdress depicted on seals and seems to prevail on the tomb reliefs.

A crenelated crown is at least technically possible for all Persepolis reliefs that were decorated either by means of paint or by means of metal ornaments (that were fully elaborated before attachment). When present, the slits on both sides of the crowns always extend beyond the upper edges of the crowns, indicating that the ornaments were higher. Free standing crenelations are a possible solution to this.

If there was indeed a crenelated dynastic crown, this would most probably have been a combination of the low crenelated band of Bīsotūn and the high cylinder, a general Persian headdress. This combination of a specific royal, crenelated band and a general Persian headdress remind us of the the royal titles summed up by Dareios in

Naqsh-i Rostam (DNa §2) which were combined with the title 'Persian': 'I am Dareios, Great King, King of Kings, King of Countries containing all kinds of Men, King of this great Earth, far and wide ... a Persian, son of a Persian, an Aryan, of Aryan lineage.'

10 APPENDIX

A few objects, which I did not discuss, are worth mentioning here. Firstly, there is a little silver bowl, inlaid with golden figurines and decorated with crenelations.¹¹⁶ Are the latter a hint that the bowl was meant as a *royal* gift? Could it have been a piece of the royal table ware, made for the purpose of giving?¹¹⁷

The Achaemenian audience scene depicted on the inner side of a shield on the the so-called Alexander sarcophagus may also be relevant to this discussion.¹¹⁸ As Meyer's reconstruction shows, there are circular ornaments on the kings crown. They are reminiscent of the rosette band on the Bīsotūn crown. Fluorescence pictures taken by von Graeve show crenelations on top of the crown, but according to von Graeve this is due to the irregular surface of the stone.¹¹⁹

Also of possible relevance is the little Elamite head on what remains of the Elamite relief in Naqsh-i Rostam.¹²⁰ This head of a probably royal person wears a city crown closely related to the

¹¹⁶ CHI2, pl. 45b; see also P. Briant, *Darius, les Perses et l'Empire* (1992) 45.

¹¹⁷ On this H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, *Gifts in the Persian Empire*. In: P. Briant/Cl. Herrenschildt (eds.), *Le Tribut dans l'Empire Perse = Travaux de l'Institut d'Etudes Iraniennes de l'Université de la Sorbonne nouvelle XVIII* (1989) 129-146.

¹¹⁸ V. von Graeve, *Der Alexander-Sarkophag und seine Werkstatt = IstForsch XXVIII* (1970) 102-113, pls. 69-72; idem., *IstMitt* 37, 1987, 131-144 H. Meyer, *Kunst und Geschichte, zur antiken Historienkunst* (1983) 108-121, pls. 15-16.

¹¹⁹ Von Graeve¹¹⁸ 103.

¹²⁰ U. Seidl, *Die Elamische Felsreliefs von Kūrāngūn und Naqsh-e Rostam = Iranische Denkmäler, Lieferung XII, Reihe II: Iranische Felsreliefs H* (1986) 16-17; fig. 2b; pls. 12a; 15a.

crenelated crown. It seems worth considering an Elamite origin of the crenelated Achaemenid crown.

Finally I would like to mention a strip of thin gold, recently offered for sale in Frankfurt a.M. Three-stepped crenelations have been cut out in the metal, apparently by means of scissors (which was not uncommon in antiquity as P. Calmeyer informed me). Although the strip is possibly a fake, it is interesting that the supposed forger made a crenelated strip. Such strips are at least not too frequent so that one wonders how he got

the idea. In any case the strip cannot have belonged to any of the Persepolis crowns. The strip is too thin, the crenelations are too small. Moreover the strip is rather short and can only have served as the metal ornament of the headdress of a small statue.

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